We claim:

1. A method of associating an annotation with a content source, the method comprising:

representing an annotation as an object having a plurality of properties wherein one of the plurality of properties is a document identifier property; and

associating the annotation with a content source using the document identifier property wherein the document identifier property identifies the content source with which the annotation is associated.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the act of representing the annotation as an object having a plurality of properties further comprises defining generic properties of the annotation.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the generic properties are selected from the group consisting of: type, content, author name, creation time, modify time, time-to-live, document identifier, index and parent identifier.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the type property of the annotation is selected from the group consisting of: a text file, a threaded message, an audio file, a video file, a calendar file, and a chat.

5. The method of claim 2, wherein the act of representing the annotation as a object having a plurality of properties further comprises define one or more type specific properties unique to the type property of the annotation.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the document identifier is selected from the group consisting of: a file name, a directory path, and a uniform resource locator.

7. A method of presenting an annotation associated with a content source, the method comprising:

sending a document identifier for a content source to a tier I server; and

receiving a first response from the tier I server, wherein the first response comprises an indication of whether one or more annotations are associated with the document identifier and a reference to a tier II server maintaining additional information for each one of the annotations associated with the document identifier.

8. The method of claim 7, further comprising displaying the first response in a manner that is non-intrusive to the content source.

9. The method of claim 7, further comprising displaying the first response in a manner that is intrusive to the content source.

10. The method of claim 7, further comprising:

sending a request to the tier II server for additional information for one of the annotations associated with the content source; and

receiving a second response from the tier II server, wherein the second response comprises one or more properties for the annotation and a reference to a tier III server for the annotation.

11. The method of claim 10, further comprising displaying the one or more properties for the annotation in a manner that is non-intrusive to the content source.

12. The method of claim 10, further comprising displaying the one or more properties for the annotation in a manner that is intrusive to the content source.

13. The method of claim 10, further comprising:

sending to tier III server an annotation identifier for the annotation associated with the content source; and

receiving a third response from the tier III server, wherein the third response comprises a body for the annotation identified by the annotation identifier.

14. The method of claim 13, further comprising displaying the body for the annotation identified by the annotation identifier in a manner that is non-intrusive to the content source.

15. The method of claim 13, further comprising displaying the body for the annotation identified by the annotation identifier in a manner that is intrusive to the content source.

16. A computer readable medium comprising computer executable steps for executing a method for associating an annotation with a content source, the method comprising:

representing an annotation as an object having a plurality of properties wherein one of the plurality of properties is a document identifier property;

associating the annotation with a content source using the document identifier property wherein the document identifier property identifies the content source with which the annotation is associated.

17. The computer readable medium of claim 16, wherein the plurality of properties are selected from the group consisting of: type, content, author name, creation time, modify time, time-to-live, document identifier, index, and parent identifier.

18. The computer readable medium of claim 17, wherein the type property of the annotation is selected from the group consisting of: a text file, a threaded message, an audio file, a video file, a calendar file, and a chat.

19. The computer readable medium of claim 17, wherein the document identifier property of the annotation is selected from the group consisting of: a file name, a directory path, and a uniform resource locator.